

GREEK SONGS IN THE MANNER OF ANACREON.

Anacreon.

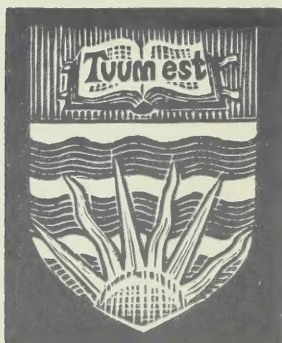
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THE POETS' TRANSLATION SERIES

Second Set: No. 1

GREEK SONGS IN THE
MANNER OF
ANACREON

Translated by
RICHARD ALDINGTON



LONDON : THE EGOIST LTD.
23 Adelphi Terrace House, Robert Street, W.C.2
1919

THE POET'S TRANSLATION SERIES

Edited by E. V. Rieu

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FOREWORD

ANACREON OF TEIOS was born about 500 B.C. and died at the age of 85. Nothing of his writings remains except a few epigrams and fragments. These "Anacreontea" are Alexandrian imitations, produced either by enthusiastic admirers or cultured triflers. But since the Greeks did not bother very much about plagiarism it is quite possible that some of Anacreon's own poetry is mixed up with the imitations. At any rate, we have here his "manner," echoes of his songs free from solemnity and dedicated to cheerful carelessness.

This translation was entirely a "war work," as it was started in a camp and finished, after a long interval, in the village of Taintignies near Tournai. A small and imperfect dictionary was the only one light enough to carry on active service; the translator is aware that this fact, added to lack of practice in Greek during the past years and the general effect of unpleasant surroundings, rendered the translation less accurate and spirited than is desirable. But it is hoped that a reader, familiar with modern writing, will find this humble prose version less repellant than that of Fawkes or those of the contemporary translators whose object seems to be to prove that the Greeks wrote doggerel.

It is perhaps unnecessary to recall that these poems have been extensively imitated by European poets ever since they were first issued by Stephanus. In England Herrick and Ben Jonson produced very delightful versions; Shelley found in them the idea for his "Fountains mingle with the rivers" and Tennyson's "Miller's Daughter" is imitated from "A Lover's Wishes." Moore's "Anacreon" is well known but little read.

Some of these translations have appeared in the *Nation*, the *New Age* and *To-Day*, to whose editors thanks are due for permission to reprint.

To A. Y. the translator gives the little that is his.

GREEK SONGS IN THE MANNER OF ANACREON

I

THE VISION OF ANACREON

IN a dream I saw Anacreon, the poet of Teios, who called to me and I, hastening to him, kissed and greeted him.

He was an old man but beautiful; beautiful and one who loved to lie with girls; his mouth was wine-scented and as he stumbled, drunk, love held him by the hand.

He lifted a flower-crown from his head and gave it to me, and it smelled of Anacreon. Like a weak fool I bound it upon my forehead and from that time till this I have not ceased from love.

II

THE SINGER

Give me the lyre of Homer, far from the note of war; bring me, ah, bring me the sacred drinking cup.

I will mix my songs—I will be drunk and dance! In hatred of temperance I will call to the mad wine-bibber with a music of lyres.

Give me the lyre of Homer, far from the note of war.

ANACREON

III

THE PAINTER

Come, dearest of painters, listen to the singing Muse.

Paint the cities for us, paint in them the many-breathing
flutes of Iacchus, the gay, the laughing, the playful Iacchus.

And if the wax be firm enough paint on it the deeds of lovers.

IV

THE WINE-CUP

Hephaistos, graver-of-silver, make for me no panoply of war
—what have I to do with battle?—but carve out for me a hollow
wine-cup.

And fashion upon it for me no stars, neither the Waggon nor
gloomy Orion. What are the Pleiades to me, what lovely
Boötes?

But carve vines upon it for me and grape-clusters and the
Mænads plucking them; grave upon it a wine-press and those
that tread out the grapes, and laughing Pans, the golden Loves,
the smiling Cytherean, and with fair Lyæus, Eros and Aphro-
dite.

ANACREON

V

ANOTHER WINE-CUP

Fair craftsman, make for me a wine-cup for the Spring—
mould the silver for me with Spring bearing the first delicate
roses and make for me a delicious draught.

Mould on it nothing foreign, no dismal tale, but rather the
son of Zeus, our Bacchus Euio!

Beat out the mystic Cyprian of the stream; make clear the
unarmed Loves, the laughing Graces;

And below a lovely-leafed blooming vine with fair grape-
clusters add beautiful boys if Phoebus will not play there.

VI

ON LOVE

Gathering flowers for a crown I found young Love among
the roses, seized him by the wings and plunged him into wine
and drank him down!

Now with his wings he caresses my heart.

VII

LOVE AND AGE

The women say: "You are old, Anacreon; take your mirror
and look in it—you have no hair, the front of your head is bald."

And I do not know whether I have hair or not, but this I do
know: that an old man may well take all delicate pleasures with
girls for he draws near to the ultimate Fate.

ANACREON

VIII

GAIETY OF WINE

Do not sing to me of Gyges, the King of Sardis; do not tell me of the envy and jealousy of the great.

Tell me to make my hair silky with perfume, tell me to circle my head with roses. Sing to me of to-day—who knows what to-morrow will be?

Be gay then, drink and love, make offering to Lyæus—lest death should come and say: “Thou shalt not be drunken.”

IX

THE WINE-BIBBER

Set me free to drink, to drink at a draught—by the gods! I will, I will be mad drunk!

Alkmaion was mad and white-foot Orestes, who slew his mother; but I kill no one, drinking red wine—I will, I will be mad drunk!

Herakles was mad once, distracted by the terrible quiver and the Iphiteian bow; Ajax also was mad, shaking the sword and shield of Hector.

But I have a wine-cup and this garland for my long hair, no dagger or bow—I will, I will be mad drunk!

ANACREON

X

THE SWALLOW

What shall I do to you, shrill-twittering swallow? Shall take you and clip your fair wings? Shall I pluck out your tongue, as Tereus did?

Ah! why with your morning songs do you steal Batthylo from my exquisite dreams?

XI

THE WAXEN LOVE

A young man offered a waxen Love; and I, who was standing near, said: "How much will you take for your work of art?"

And he answered in Doric: "Take it for what you like to give, for it will make you mad with desire. I am not a wax-moulder, but I should not like to live with all-powerful Love."

"Give him to me, then," said I, "give me, for a drachma, this lovely bedfellow."

Love! burn me at once with desire—if not I will melt you in the fire.

ANACREON

XII

THE WINE-BIBBER AGAIN

They say that stately Cybele cried out among the hills in an agony of grief for Attis.

And those beside the banks of Klaros, drinking the singing water of laurel-bearing Apollo, cry out and are mad.

But I will take my fill of wine and of perfume and of my mistress—

And I will be mad drunk!

XIII

LOVE

I will, I will kiss.

Love urges me to kiss. And since this is not my desire I was unwilling to be urged.

Love shook his straight bow and gold quiver; he called me to the fight.

I struggled with Love, throwing the breast-plate upon my shoulders, my spear and ox-hide shield, like Achilles.

He struck and I fled. And as he had no shafts he grew angry, hurled himself at me in a glance.

He pierced to my heart and overwhelmed me. In vain I have a shield; for, since he is within me, is he not out of shot?

ANACREON

XIV

THE LIBERTINE

If all the leaves of the trees could be numbered, if the sands of the whole great sea could be counted, I could make you the sole computer of my loves.

Take first from Athens twenty loves and then fifteen more. From Corinth take strings of mistresses, for this is Achaia where the women are beautiful.

Give me two thousand loves from the Lesbians to the Ionians, Carians and Rhodians.

“Why do you talk such folly!”

I have not yet counted the Syrians, not yet my mistresses at Canopus nor all those at Crete where Love riots in the cities.

Ah! why should I count for you those beyond Gadara and the loves of my soul in Bactria and India?

ANACREON

XV

THE PIGEON

“Beautiful pigeon, whence do you fly? How is it that you are scented and drip with such sweet perfumes as you fly through the air? What are you? What is it you want?”

“Anacreon sent me to his love, to Batthyllos who is now the lord and ruler of his life. The Cytherean sold me for a little song; and I serve Anacreon in all things. Now I carry for him letters like these and he says he will soon set me free. But even if he sends me away I remain his slave. For why should I fly and bestir myself in the meadows and eat wild food in the trees when I now eat barley-grain, pecking it from the hand of Anacreon himself? He gives me wine to drink which he has first tasted himself, and when I have drunk I dance on high and cover my master with the rustle of my wings. And I fall asleep lulled by the sound of his lyre.”

“You have all things that are good! Shoo! Get away! You have made me chatter like a crow.”

ANACREON

XVI

PORTRAIT OF A LADY

Come, dearest of painters, master of Rhodian art, and paint for me the picture of my absent mistress in the way I tell you.

First, paint her hair soft and black—and if wax can render it—paint it scented with perfume. Above her cheek and under her dark hair paint her ivory temple. Do not cut or entirely join her eyebrows and put in that imperceptible dark shadow about her eyes. Make her eyes of real fire, clear like Athene's, and languid, like the Cytherean's.

Paint her nostrils and cheeks; mingling roses with milk; paint her mouth like Persuasion, ready for kisses. Let all the Graces flutter about the voluptuous curve of her face and around her marble-white throat.

Drape the rest of her in a shaded purple peplum, but let a very little of her flesh gleam through it to show she has a body.

It is enough—I can see her: but a little and the wax would speak!

ANACREON

XVII

PORTRAIT OF BATTHYLLOS

Paint for me Batthyllos, the lover, as I tell you. Make his hair bright; black at the roots, yet golden at the ends; and let the free tendrils of his hair lie lawless as they choose.

Let his eyebrow, which is darker than a serpent, garland his dew-soft brow. Let his fierce dark eye be tempered with grace—the fierceness of Ares, the grace of Aphrodite—so that anyone who flees from the one surrenders to the other.

Make his downy cheek like a rose-tinted apple. Make the flush of his skin like that of Dis if you had to paint him. And I know not in what fashion you should make his lips—soft and full like Persuasion; yet the wax keeps all his speech in silence.

After his face set down his ivory throat, surpassing Adonis. Paint his chest and two hands like Hermes, his thighs like Polydeukes, and his belly like Dionysius; and above his soft thighs, make his smooth sex, the fire near his thighs, already desirous of the Paphian.

Yours is a poor art since you cannot show his back as well. And what shall I say to you of his feet?

Take your money, take whatever you ask. Depose Apollo himself and make Batthyllos, and if ever you come to Samos set up Batthyllos instead of Phœbus.

ANACREON

XVIII

DESIRE

O women, let me drink a draught of Bromios, for now I am wearied with heat and cry aloud. Give me flowers; I will be covered thick with garlands.

My temples burn; where shall I shelter, O heart, from the flames of love?

XVIII b

A RESTING PLACE

I lie by the grove of Batthyllos and a beautiful tree sways with the most delicate shoots of soft leaves.

Beside it a flowing fountain murmurs of desire.

Who then, seeing this resting place, would depart?

XIX

LOVE THE SLAVE

The Muses bound Love in garlands and gave him to Kalleis.

And now the Cytherean brings a ransom to have Love set free.

If anyone does free him he will not leave but stay; he has learned to be a slave.

ANACREON

XX

THE THREE POETS

Sweet the singing of Anacreon, ah! sweet the songs of Sappho; the mingled song of Pindar pours into me.

And it seems to me that Dionysius and Aphrodite of the sleek body and Eros himself would drink of these three.

XXI

THE DRINKER

The dark earth drinks and the trees drink the earth; the sea drinks the winds and the sun drinks the sea and the moon drinks the sun.

Why, O friends, do you quarrel with me for drinking as I wish?

XXII

A LOVER'S WISHES

The child of Tantalus once stood a stone upon the hills of Phrygia; and the bird, the swallow of Pandion, was once a girl.

I would be a mirror that you would always look at me—I would be your dress so that you would always wear me.

I would like to be water so that I could bathe your flesh; I would be a perfume, dear, so that I could touch you.

And I would be the riband at your breast and the pearls about your throat; I would be your sandal that I might be trodden by your feet.

ANACREON

XXIII

THE LOVER'S LYRE

I would like to sing of the Atridæ and of Kadmos, but my lyre sings Love alone upon its strings.

Just now I changed the strings of the lyre and sang of Herakles, but the lyre spoke only of love.

There is nothing left but to say farewell, O heroes, for the lyre sings only of love.

XXIV

WOMEN'S GIFT

Nature gave horns to the bull and hoofs to horses, fleetness to hares and a wide mouth of teeth to the lion, swimming to fish, flight to birds, and wisdom to men, but to women nothing.

Nothing? Beauty is a gift beyond all shields and swords and she who is beautiful conquers steel and fire.

XXV

LOVE'S NEST

Dear swallow, when you come back with the new year, you weave your nest; and in winter you disappear to the Nile or Memphis.

Love builds ever a nest in my heart; one Desire is winged there and another is an egg and another already half-hatched; and ever comes the cry of the gaping nestlings. And the larger feed the lesser loves.

Those who feed straightway conceive others. What is to be done then? I cannot out-clamour all these loves!

ANACREON

XXVI

HER EYES

You talk of Thebes and of the Phrygians, but I speak of my own conquests.

No horse slew me, no foot-soldier, no ship, but a new enemy struck me from her eyes.

XXVII

LOVE'S BRAND

Horses have marks branded with fire on their flanks and anyone can pick out the Persians by their mitres.

When I see lovers I know them at once, for they have a small brand within the soul.

XXVIII

LOVE'S DART

The husband of Cytherea by the furnace of Lemnos took iron and fashioned the shafts of the loves.

And Aphrodite took sweet honey to anoint the tips, but Love mingled gall with it.

Ares shaking his thick spear, sneered at Love's shaft, but Love said: "It is heavy; those who have felt it know that."

Ares received the dart; Aphrodite smiled a little. But Ares groaned and cried: "It is heavy indeed—take it from me" But Love said: "Keep it "

ANACREON

XXIX

MERCENARY LOVE

It is bitter not to be kissed, it is bitter to be kissed; but bitterer than all things is to lose one's love.

Love now has no child; O cunning one, old custom is disdained—they care only for money.

May he perish who first loved money! Through him there are no brothers, through him no fathers; enemies, murders, because of him.

And this is the worst—through him we that are lovers are destroyed.

XXX

A DREAM

I thought in a dream that Love with wings upon his shoulders and lead about his lovely feet, sped by and lighted down.

What does this mean? I think it means that after wandering in Love with many I am now taken from all others and bound hand and foot in this.

ANACREON

XXXI

LOVE THE PURSUER

Love flays me with a hyacinth rod and bids me to fight.

I dash through the sharp windless forest and the valleys;
and my sweat exhausts me.

My heart leaps to my mouth and I desire death.

But Love brushes my brow with soft wings and whispers:
"Can you not kiss?"

XXXII

THE HEDONIST

I would drink, stretched upon delicate myrtle boughs and
lotus grass. And Love, with his robe fastened about his throat
with papyrus, should serve me wine.

For like the wheel of a chariot rolling life hurries past and
soon we lie a little dust of loosened bones.

Why should one perfume a stone? Why shed foolishness
upon earth?

While I live I will perfume my head and bind it with roses
and speak the name of my mistress.

O Love, before I leave the dance to go under the earth I will
scatter sorrow afar!

ANACREON

XXXIII

LOVE THE WANDERER

In the mid hours of the night when the Bear had turned around the hand of Boötes, and all the race of those who have speech lay silent, crafty Love beat on the fastenings of my door. I called out: "Who knocks at my door? Who are you who break my dreams?"

And Love said: "Open! It is a child, do not be afraid. I am drenched with wandering in the moonless night."

Hearing this I was moved by pity; then I kindled a torch and opened the door and saw a winged child, carrying a bow and quiver. By the hearth he stretched out the palms of his hands to the fire and pressed the water from his hair.

When he was free of cold he said: "Let me try my bow and see if the wet has spoiled the string." He drew it and struck me in the heart like a sting.

Then, mocking, he sprang away and said: "O friend, rejoice! My bow is unhurt, for you are stabbed to the heart."

ANACREON

XXXIV

THE CICADA

We think you happy, O cicada, since drinking a little dew in the tree-tops you sing like a master. For all that you see in the fields, all that the woods bear are yours.

You are dear to the toiler; you harm no one; you are honoured by mortals, a sweet prophet of summer; the Muses love you and so does Phœbus who teaches you your shrill song.

Old age wears not upon you, O wise, earth-born song-lover! Unpained, innocent of blood you are almost like the gods.

XXXV

LOVE OF THE BEE

Love did not know there was a bee sleeping in the roses and was stung; he shook his finger and cried out.

He ran and fluttered to the beautiful Cytherean and exclaimed: "I am killed, mother, I am killed, I shall die! A little winged serpent which peasants call a honey-bee, stabbed me."

And she answered: "If the sting of a honey-bee hurt so much, how do you think they suffer, Love, who are stung by you?"

ANACREON

XXXVI

THE IDEALIST

If wealth of gold gave life to men they would die—if only they might cheat and gain.

But since life comes to man unbought why should I groan after folly? Why pursue lamentation? If I am fated to die, of what use is gold to me?

Alas! let me drink, drink sweet wine and converse with my friends and worship the Cyprian upon soft beds!

XXXVII

THE DREAM

Lying through the night on sea-purple rugs, glad with Lyæus, I fancied a swift flight stretched out the tips of their wings, with laughing girls and lads more exquisite than Lyæus saying to me heart-piercing things through their beauty.

I tried to kiss them and all fled from my sleep; and yearning in pain I longed for sleep once more.

ANACREON

XXXVIII

PRAISE OF WINE

We will drink wine and sing of Bacchus, inventor of dancing, lover of all wild music! He is like the Loves, he is dear to the Cytherean; through him rapture is born and grace brought forth, through him violence is restrained, through him grief is assuaged.

The graceful slaves bear in wine and all sorrow flies away to mingle with the wind-fed storm; we take wine and drink away misery.

What use is it to suffer anguish? What the end will be, who knows? Life is a mystery to us—ah, let me drink and dance and sleek myself with oil and lie with beautiful women! Grief? I am well enough practised in it!

We will drink wine and sing of Bacchus.

XXXIX

OLD MEN AND DANCING

I love a handsome old man and I love a young man who can dance, but if an old man dances he is old in grey hair and grows childish in his mind.

ANACREON

XL

CARPE DIEM

Since I was born a mortal to travel the track of life I know what time I have passed and I do not know how much I have to come. Leave me then, sorrow, let there be no dealing between us.

I will be gay and laugh and dance with Lyæus before the end overtakes me.

XLI

SPRING

It is good to go a-foot in Spring when the meadows are blossoming and the west wind breathes its sweetest fine air, good to see the grape-shoots, good to walk under the vine-leaves, good to possess a beautiful girl scented with love!

XLII

A FACILE AMORIST

I delight in the dances of Dionysios and I like to play on the lyre with some young fellow-drinker, but most of all I like to bind my head with a hyacinth crown and be happy with different girls.

My heart is ignorant of jealousy; I know nothing of it. I escape its stupid pricks. I loathe drunken squabbles.

Let us enjoy life tranquilly and sing to the lyre with fresh budding girls at very gay feasts.

ANACREON

XLIII

THE BANQUET

We set rose crowns upon our heads, we laugh and drink deliciously.

A fragile girl, with ivy-wreathed hair and a thyrsus in her hand, dances to the lyre. A soft-haired lad plays on the paktis, pouring out his clear voice—sweetness of breathing mouths!

And gold-fleshed Love and Lyæus and the exquisite Cytherean mingle in the banquet of the old men.

XLIV

ROSES

We will scatter the rose of the Loves on the wine, we will bind the lovely-petalled rose on our brows and laugh and drink gaily.

Rose, O loveliest flower, rose, glory of the Spring, rose, beloved of the gods, rose, with whom Love garlands the clear hair of those who dance with the Graces—crown me! I will sing of the shrines of Dionysios and dance beside a deep-breasted girl, garlanded with little roses.

XLV

PRAISE OF WINE

When I drink wine, bitter thoughts leave me. Why should I weary myself with tears and anxiety and distress? I have to die and I hate it! Why should I spend my life wandering about?

Drink! Drink the wine-god! Bitter thoughts vanish before him.

ANACREON

XLVI

SPRING

The Graces bear in the roses of glittering Spring; the sea wave softens into laughter, the wild-duck dives, the crane takes flight!

The sun burns clear, the cloud shadows are stirred, the works of men are made plain, the earth looks forth with her fruits, the fruit of the olive looks forth.

The stream of Bromios is crowned with leaves, with young shoots; the fruit hangs with the flowers.

XLVII

AN OLD BRAGGART

I am old and I drink more than the young men; if I want to dance I will imitate Silenus in public and dance with a wine-jar for a staff—a reed is useless.

And if I want to fight I will fight and win too! Slave, bring me a cup filled with sweet honey-coloured wine.

I am old and I drink more than the young men.

XLVIII

A DRUNKARD

When it is the will of Bacchus my troubles vanish; I seem to have the wealth of Cræsus and I long to sing.

I lie crowned with ivy and in imagination I am lord of all things. Prepare, and I will drink!

Slave, bring me a wine-cup. It is better to lie here drunk than dead.

ANACREON

XLIX

THE DANCER

When the son of Zeus, the liberator, the wine-giver, Bacchus, enters me, he inspires me to dance.

And I, the wine-lover, have this pleasure also—Aphrodite applauds me with clapping of hands, with song.

And once more I am inspired to dance.

L

THE WINE-GOD

When I drink wine my heart is aflame . . . and begins to murmur of the Muse.

When I drink, I cast anxiety and good advice to the winds that blow over the sea.

When I drink wine, Bacchus, the freer-from-pain, the bright with wine, leads me into flower-scented air.

When I drink wine, I weave a flower-crown for my head and I sing the laughter of life.

When I drink wine, my body drips with myrrh and I call upon love and sing gaily of a girl.

When I drink wine and my head is a little dizzy from many wine-cups, I am happy with a throng of girls.

When I drink wine, then only do I live. I know what I say is true; death reaches all men.

ANACREON

LI

A GIRL

Do not run from me, at the sight of my sea-grey hair; do not, in your full flowering season, deny me your sweets, dear; look how white flowers twine with roses for a love-garland.

LII

THE HEDONIST

Why do you teach me the laws and power of Orators? What do I care for their words?

Teach me rather how to drink the delicate wine of Lyæus, teach me how to be happy with golden Aphrodite.

White hair is my hair's garland—slave, bring water and wine! They mingle with my soul.

Do not waste your short life; among the dead there is no love.

ANACREON

LIII

AN OLD FOOL

When I see you among the young men, the very spirit of youth is with me and though I am old I seem to be winged for the dance.

I leap about wildly! Cybele could not surpass me. I would have flowers in my hair.

Grey age be far from me! Like a young man I will dance with the young.

Bring me the life-giving wine of the god and see the strength of the old man who teaches you how to sing, how to drink and how to dance with graciousness!

LIV

A PICTURE OF EUROPA

This bull can be none other than Zeus himself for he carries the Sidonian girl on his back over the wide sea and cleaves the waves with his hoofs.

And no other bull of the herd swims the sea save only this one.

ANACREON

LV

THE ROSE

I will sing of the delicate rose, the exquisite lover of the garlanded spring.

The rose is the breath of the gods, the delight of mortals, the pleasure of the Graces and the Hours, a voluptuous game for the many-flowering Loves; it is dear to the legends and a gracious flower of the Muses—Love brings its sweetness into thorny paths and grasps and cherishes it in soft light hands!

The glory of the rose—was it not made for feasts and the tables of the Wine-god?

Poets call the Dawn rose-fingered; the Nymphs rose-armed; Aphrodite rose-fleshed.

It is dear also to the common people, for it aids in sickness and wards off disease; it cheats time; and the old age of the rose has the scent of its first youth.

Let us speak of the birth of roses. When the sea brought forth from the foam of the dark-blue deep Aphrodite, dripping with spray; and Zeus brought forth from his head Athene, the lifter of the clamor of war, the terrible goddess of Olympus; then the earth blossomed with the marvellous new flowering of roses, an exquisite birth-gift.

And the high gods who made the rose shed nectar upon the thorn and brought forth the lordly imperishable bud of Lyæus.

ANACREON

LVI

BACCHUS THE VINE-TENDER

The god, who inspires the unwearied man and the young man fearless in desire and the exquisite dancer at revels, has returned—the god who brings a delicate charm to men, a gay drink, the god who loves wine, child of the vineyard, bound up in the fruits of the wine twigs. So when they cut the grape clusters, they are rich and healthy, in the visible body and in the sweet soul until another summer.

LVII

A MIRROR ENGRAVED WITH APHRODITE

Who has fashioned the sea? What wild art poured out the wave upon a mirror? Who, with mind risen to the gods, inspired first by the blessed, has graved the white lovely Cyprian upon the ridges of the sea?

Here she is shown naked and those parts of a woman we should not look at are clothed with the waves. And as she strays through the waves they leap, and as they bear her delicate-fleshed body to the shore of the white calm water she draws the wave after her. A great wave ends between her rose-coloured breasts and her delicate throat.

And, in the furrow of the waves, Aphrodite gleams through the calm water like a lily among violets.

Eros and Desire ride laughing over the silver on leaping dolphins and the chorus of fishes leaps through the waves and caresses the Paphian's body so that she swims laughing!

ANACREON

LVIII

GOLD

Gold, the runaway, flies from me—always, always it eludes me!—flies on swift wind-swept wings. But I do not pursue it. Who pursues hatred?

Gold the runaway has gone; I cast my sorrows to the wind and sing love songs to the lyre. Yet when my soul seems to have learned disdain the runaway suddenly calls to me, bringing a draught of worry, and I lose my delight in the exquisite lyre.

Faithless, faithless gold! You cheat me with your treacheries. But listen! The lyre strings murmur rather of desire than of you.

You, the envious, the deceitful, set love of yourself in men's hearts, but the lyre mingles wine-cups and bridal-chamber kisses and dear desires—

You escape me when you wish and I am scarcely left the music of my lyre.

And instead of our own acts you prefer worthless foreign imitations—a Muse alien to me sounds the lyre for their hearts.

LIX

THE GRAPE HARVEST

Men with girls bear on their shoulders the black-skinned grape-clusters in baskets and throw them into a wine-press where men tread the grapes to set free the must, and beat out the great God with vintage-songs and watch Dionysios seething to lovely youth in the wine-jars.

When an old man drinks it he reels as he dances with wide-swung grey hair.

But a young man, full of wine, who finds a girl's delicate body laid asleep upon frail leaves takes her in sharp love before the bridal-time. He does not take her with words but by force against her will—for in young men the wine-god riots brutally.

LX

APOLLO

I will make wild music on the lyre, not in any contest but for practice by which alone comes the choice flower of skill. As I strike shrill music from the ivory plectrum I will cry out in the Phrygian measure, like the swan of Kaustros singing on the wing in unison with the wind.

Muse, dance also, for the cithara of Phœbus is holy and the laurel tripod.

I sing the love of Phœbus, his useless agony; the girl was chaste, she fled from desire and as she gasped for breath her body changed and grew stiff as a straight-grown tree. And Phœbus who yearned to be lord of the girl plucked the yellow branch to fashion the cithara.

O heart, heart, why are you stupidly wroth with the loveliest of passions? Bring the strong shaft and hurl it to the mark. Loose the bow of Aphrodite, the bow which conquers gods. Imitate Anacreon, the poet famous in song, drink the beakers of wine, the holy wine-cups of speech; let us be consoled by the drink of the gods and flee from the burning star.

Let us shelter from the sun.

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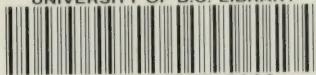
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